



NEWS RELEASE

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USDA ANNOUNCES NEW FOOD PYRAMID FOR PRESCHOOLERS

WASHINGTON, Oct. 23, 2008 — Audrey won't eat any veggies, and Valerie only eats foods that are white. What's a parent to do?

USDA has come to the rescue. On Oct. 26th the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is launching a new website called *MyPyramid for Preschoolers* designed specifically for parents and caregivers at the annual convention of the American Dietetic Association in Chicago. This new, interactive website, found at MyPyramid.gov, provides unique, individualized nutrition guidance to meet the needs of preschoolers 2 to 5 years of age.

In announcing *MyPyramid for Preschoolers*, Brian Wansink, Executive Director for the USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (CNPP) said, "We're giving a helping hand to families so they can help their kids to eat a more nutritious diet. What I find personally most useful with my two preschoolers is how to talk with your children about what to eat and tips on how to have fun with your kids around the dinner table."

Key topic areas of *MyPyramid for Preschoolers* include:

- **MyPyramid Plan** where users can create a customized eating plan.
- **Growth During the Preschool Years** answers the question -- *Is my child growing the way he or she should be?*
- **Developing Healthy Eating Habits** provides parents and caregivers with what they can do to help children develop healthy eating habits.
- **Physical Activity** provides answers to questions about physical activity for preschoolers and provides tips to help them be more active.
- **Food Safety** provides information on keeping foods safe to eat.
- **Sample Meal and Snack Patterns** help translate the "MyPyramid Plan" into individual meals and snacks.

Research shows that parents and caregivers want to know more about nutrition for their preschool children. In addition to the broad spectrum of topic areas covered on this site, are the interactive components including a customized “MyPyramid Plan” that can be printed and posted on the refrigerator door. Wansink concluded, “We are offering a variety of unique, cutting edge, online tools to help the American public make more healthful food choices.”

Developed by CNPP in collaboration with Team Nutrition of the Food and Nutrition Service, this new website provides nutrition guidance consistent with current scientific research and the 2005 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. The subject areas and content were identified and developed with assistance from a wide array of experts from the USDA, Health and Human Services, academia and related research fields.

The interactive components can be found in the **MyPyramid Plan** and **Growth** sections of the website. They include a customized “MyPyramid Plan,” Body Mass Index (BMI), and Height-for-Age charts. The personalized “MyPyramid Plan” provides a general guide for what and how much to offer daily from each of the food groups. The BMI and Height-for-Age results are calculated and displayed on a printable, user-friendly graph.

For more information, go MyPyramid.gov and click on MyPyramid for Preschoolers.